

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Figs. 9, 10, 11, 13 and 14. These sheets, which include Figs. 9, 10, 11, 13 and 14, replace the original or replacement sheets, previously submitted, including Figs. 9, 10, 11, 13 and 14. In Figs. 9, 10, 11, 13 and 14, the elements 13 and 24 have been correctly identified. Previously, the reference numbers in these figures were inadvertently reversed; see Figs. 3a, 3b and 3c for correct identification of the parts 13 and 24.

Attachment:: Replacement Sheets

Annotated Sheets Showing Reference Number Changes

REMARKS

The Allowability of claims 1-27, 38, 40-45, 47-54, 58-61, 64, 68-73, 77-81, and 83-86 is acknowledged with appreciation. Applicant would like to express his gratitude for the thorough review of the application and the very detailed action; it was truly helpful in placing this case in condition for allowance. There follows a detail statement of how the case has been amended in response to the action.

In the review of the claims, some revision has occurred. To wit, claims 27-37, 39, 46, 55-57, 62-63, 65-68, 70, 73-74, 76 and 82 have been cancelled; these cancelled claims included all the withdrawn claims. Claims 1-26, 38, 40-45, 47-54, 58-61, 64, 69, 71-72, 75, 77-81 and 83-86 remain, most of which have been amended per the action, and new claims 87-96 all of which are dependent from claim 1, claim 15 or claim 38, and incorporate some of the subject matter of previously present in the withdrawn claims. Since claims 1, 15, 38 and 77, the independent claims, have been indicated as allowable, the election of species previously made, is considered no longer applicable in view of broader claims indicated as allowable. The claims remaining in the case include all the limitations of the independent claims from which they depend directly or indirectly, and for that reason are believed proper and allowable.

A correction to the drawings is presented herewith due to an inadvertent reversal of reference numbers in Figs. 9, 10, 11, 13 and 14. The carriage 13 and carriage mount 24 shown in Figs. 3a, 3b and 3c were inadvertently reversed in the other figures.

Regarding the specification comment in Para 6 of the action, this has been attended to by suitable claim amendment.

Regarding the objections to the specification in Para 7 of the action, appropriate amendments have been made to cure same, without in any way presenting any new matter.

Regarding the rejection under Section 112 in Paras 8 and 9 of the action, it is respectfully pointed out that the bolts 10 and 11 control the load absorbency of the intercoupling of the upper and lower parts of the steering column. As is well known to the Examiner, two parts bolted together by two bolts are harder to tear apart, require a greater force, than if only one bolt is used. That is the principle, simple mechanics. Bolts 10 and 11 attach two parts, see Fig. 1 for example. If one bolt, say, bolt 11 is removed

by igniting its charge and blowing the bolt 11 to pieces, the force required to tear the parts apart against bolt 10 is less than if bolt 11 is not removed and remains intact. In this manner, a two step load absorbency is achieved. In Fig. 1 the sheet of metal deforms by being torn out of its intercoupling. The deformation is described more vividly by the structure illustrated in Fig. 3a and Fig. 5. Here the intercoupling is controlled by sheets of metal connected with tear seams. Note that until bolt 10 has been rendered ineffective, bolt 11, which is located at one end of a slot, now becomes effective by moving in its slot to the other end and bearing against the load being imposed. The point is that the bolts act individually to give two step load absorbency whereby the system can adjust to the expected load that will be imposed on the steering wheel by the driver. Will it be a small load due to a small lady, or a large load due to a heavy man, or something in between?

Regarding Para 11 of the action, subparagraphs a to r, appropriate amendments have been made. Regarding subparagraphs g, o, p and r, it is respectfully noted that Paragraph 0062 of the specification and related paragraphs expressly mentions that load restrictor 8A is designed in such a way that it tears at tearing seam 26 upon a load excess. Up until the excess, the load is being absorbed. This is implicitly understood from the language of this paragraph. This is illustrated in Fig. 5. That is exactly what a load absorber does, absorb the energy of the driver striking the steering wheel so that upon a load excess, the steering wheel and steering column after absorbing a given load, the parts are separated and the upper part moves down away from the driver. As the Examiner surely appreciates, if the steering column and steering wheel did not move down away from the driver, the driver could easily be crushed and fatally injured. By the same token, it is important for obvious reasons that the driver not be thrown forward too violently in the event of a crash. Therefore, the load absorber provides this function.

The claim objections expressed in Paragraph 12 of the action have been cured by amendment.

In light of the foregoing remarks, this application should be in condition for allowance, and early passage of this case to issue is respectfully requested. If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to

the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

It is respectfully requested that, if necessary to effect a timely response, this paper be considered as a Petition for an Extension of Time, time sufficient, to effect a timely response, and shortages in this or other fees, be charged, or any overpayment in fees be credited, to the Deposit Account of the undersigned, Account No. 500601 (Docket no. 7100-X04-025CIP)

Respectfully submitted,



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